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C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 001343

SIPDIS

PASS TO USAID

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/12/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#), [EAID](#), [BM](#), [ASSK](#), [NLD](#)

SUBJECT: AUNG SAN SUU KYI THANKS AMERICA FOR ITS SUPPORT,
SEEKS ASSISTANCE FOR NLD-RUN SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS

Classified By: CHIEF OF MISSION CARMEN MARTINEZ FOR REASON 1.4 (B/D)

1. (C) SUMMARY: Aung San Suu Kyi sent a verbal message via a trusted Burmese confidante to us October 8 to: A) thank the U.S. for its continued strong support of democracy in Burma, B) warn that "some in the UN system are seeking to undermine America's efforts in Burma," and C) seek USG support for NLD-sponsored social welfare programs. End Summary.

2. (C) Emboff met a Burmese confidante of Aung San Suu Kyi on October 8. This source, one of three or four people who can enter and leave ASSK's housing compound regularly, requested the meeting. He stated that Aung San Suu Kyi had provided him with a very specific message to pass verbally, noting that for security reasons she preferred not to send a written note at this time.

3. (C) First, Aung San Suu Kyi sent her profound thanks for the staunch support by the American government and people for the cause of democracy in Burma, the contact said. Aung San Suu Kyi said that the U.S. has shown itself to be a true and close friend of Burma, he added.

4. (C) Second, ASSK sent a warning, not further amplified, that she has learned that some officials in the United Nation system are working against U.S. objectives in Burma. (For potential context, see sensitive reporting in other channels.)

5. (C) Third, she asked for USG support for NLD social welfare programs. She specified four types of programs for which she sought U.S. support: pencils and notebooks for students, medicines, support for the elderly, and continued support for the Embassy-run Professional Development Program (PDP) aimed at building next-generation leadership potential among NLD officials. The contact also mentioned support for the families of political prisoners.

6. (C) Since the NLD as a party is forbidden from receiving outside assistance under Burmese law and refuses to do so on principle, we discussed potential delivery mechanisms should support for ASSK's suggested programs be forthcoming. One idea posited was that ASSK might nominate non-NLD individuals as cutouts to receive assistance and funnel it on to the NLD. (Note: This approach has been used successfully in the recent past. End Note.) The contact said he'd discuss this in detail with Aung San Suu Kyi at the earliest opportunity and get back to us. We added that some sort of handwritten request, even if not addressed directly to us for security's sake, would be desirable prior to the start of any such assistance.

7. (C) COMMENT: ASSK's verbal message was likely in response to at least three queries we have stealthily delivered to her in recent months seeking her views on ways the USG might assist the pro-democracy movement. We were a bit surprised by her comments on PDP, as the initial batch of NLD trainees she nominated has completed its course of study and we are still waiting for an NLD response to our repeated inquiries regarding a potential second batch of participants. Aung San Suu Kyi knows that the NLD, which is at very low ebb, needs to provide something positive to its members and supporters - if not democracy and a better life immediately, then at least pencils and paper for their children and perhaps some medicine for the ill. This is the first direct message we have received from her since April. End Comment.

Martinez